

House Bill 170  
January 24, 2013  
Presented by Ken McDonald  
House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am Ken McDonald, Wildlife Division Administrator of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). I am here to provide information and answer any questions regarding House Bill 170.

HB 170 will provide a three-day nonresident Upland Game Bird hunting license for \$50. To put it into perspective, a nonresident upland game bird license currently costs \$110 and is valid for the full 4-month season. There are pros and cons to offering a three-day license at a reduced cost.

Pros include more flexibility and cheaper prices for nonresident visitors who are here for just a few days. This could motivate someone who might not otherwise hunt in MT to do so, which we assumed would be the case in our fiscal note.

Cons include potentially more crowding and competition during busy times, especially opening days; and loss of sales of full season licenses to people who will now buy a \$50 three-day license instead of the full season \$110 license. We have also heard some concerns by businesses that rely on upland game bird hunters for a significant part of their business that this could impact their business since hunters who previously stayed more days or made multiple trips to MT might just go for one, three-day visit with this license option.

Because of these competing clear pros cons, FWP has not taken a position on this bill.

This is one of many bills that affects hunting and fishing license costs, structure, and fees, each of which is being addressed independently. It would be timely over the next interim to look at incremental changes that have been made over time to all FWP licenses, fees, and license structure to determine the most effective and equitable system for hunters and anglers.

I am available to answer any questions the Committee might have.